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**JOINT RESOLUTION MEMORIALIZING CONGRESS TO STRENGTHEN LAWS AGAINST MASS VIOLENCE AND DOMESTIC TERRORISM, CONDEMNING THE VIOLENCE IN CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA AND EXPRESSING THE COMMITMENT OF THE LEGISLATURE TO UPHOLD CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS**

**WHEREAS**, on the night of Friday, August 11, 2017, a day before a white nationalist demonstration was scheduled to occur in Charlottesville, Virginia, hundreds of torch-bearing white nationalists, white supremacists, Klansmen and neo-Nazis chanted racist, anti-Semitic and anti-immigrant slogans and violently engaged with counter-demonstrators on and around the grounds of the University of Virginia in Charlottesville; and

**WHEREAS**, on Saturday, August 12, 2017, ahead of the scheduled start time of the planned march, protestors and counter-demonstrators gathered at Emancipation Park in Charlottesville; and

**WHEREAS**, the extremist demonstration turned violent, culminating in the death of peaceful counter-demonstrator Heather Heyer and injuries to 19 other individuals after a reported neo-Nazi sympathizer drove a vehicle into a crowd, which resulted in a charge of 2nd-degree murder, 3 counts of malicious wounding and one count of hit and run; and

**WHEREAS**, 2 Virginia State Police officers, Lieutenant Pilot H. Jay Cullen and Trooper Pilot Berke M. M. Bates, died in a helicopter crash as they patrolled the events occurring below them; and

**WHEREAS**, the Charlottesville community is engaged in a healing process following this horrific and violent display of bigotry; and

**WHEREAS**, the State fully supports the right to free speech, the right to assemble peaceably and the right to petition the government for a redress of grievances; however, the assembly in Charlottesville turned violent and it became clear that some in attendance were there to promote racial tensions, destroy our principles and do harm to the fabric of our nation; and

**WHEREAS**, any organization that perpetuates violence and terrorism has no place in a civil society; and

**WHEREAS**, any crimes committed by such organizations should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED:** That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-eighth Legislature now assembled in the Second Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to condemn the violence and the attack that took place during the events on August 11 and August 12, 2017 in Charlottesville, Virginia; recognize the first responders who lost their lives in the course of monitoring the events; offer our deepest condolences to the families and friends of those individuals who were killed; extend our deepest sympathy and support to those individuals injured in the violence; and express our support for the Charlottesville community; and be it further

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**RESOLVED:** That We reaffirm our sworn oaths to defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of Maine and reaffirm our solemn commitment to continue to protect and champion the rights and liberties of Maine citizens that are guaranteed under the state and federal constitutions, including freedom of expression; freedom of association, including the right to attend meetings without being illegally monitored and the right to belong to an organization without fear of reprisal; freedom from unreasonable searches and seizures; and the right to due process protections; and be it further

**RESOLVED:** That We, your Memorialists, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to call upon our United States Representatives and Senators to review and, where warranted, strengthen laws to ensure law enforcement agencies have the necessary tools to prevent and prosecute acts of mass violence and domestic terrorism committed within the boundaries of our nation, as long as the laws do not infringe upon fundamental rights and liberties as recognized and enshrined in the United States Constitution and its amendments; and be it further

**RESOLVED:** That suitable copies of the resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and each member of the Maine Congressional Delegation as well as the members of the Virginia Congressional Delegation.